Middle Years Assessment
Grade 8 English Language Arts
Reading Comprehension and Expository Writing

Support Document for Teachers

Manitoba
Building for the Future

MIDDLE YEARS ASSESSMENT: GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: READING COMPREHENSION AND EXPOSITORY WRITING

Support Document for Teachers

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This resource is also available on the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth website: <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/assess/index.html>.

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SECTION 1:
INTRODUCTION

Middle Years Assessment Policy Overview 3

INTRODUCTION

Middle Years Assessment Policy Overview

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has developed a Middle Years Assessment Policy, published in *Middle Years Assessment of Key Competencies in Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, Expository Writing, and Student Engagement* (2006). It applies to all students in Grade 7 and Grade 8 in provincially funded schools. The primary purpose of the policy is to enhance student learning and engagement through classroom-based assessment processes that build student awareness and confidence in learning. Research shows that both the quality and level of academic achievement and student engagement can be increased through formative assessment (assessment *for* and *as* learning)*.

The second purpose of the policy is to summarize data and report on the levels of achievement in key areas that Middle Years students have attained by the end of January. These key areas are based on what most Manitobans regard as vital for all students: a reasonable level of reading, writing, number skills, and student engagement.

There are two distinct audiences for this summative assessment (assessment of learning). One is the learning team, which comprises the teacher, student, and parents**. Assessment information about each student reported in January can be used to plan the specific next steps in the student's learning and support the ongoing dialogue with parents. The second audience is the larger community—the school, school division, the Department, and the public—that can use the information to look for trends and make decisions about the provision of resources that further support and enhance student learning.

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* The terms "assessment for learning" and "assessment as learning" have recently entered the educational lexicon. These concepts can both be viewed as part of formative assessment. Assessment *for* learning refers to assessment processes that assist the teacher in planning and differentiating instruction, that provide feedback on teaching and learning, and that enhance student motivation and commitment to learning. Assessment *as* learning focuses on the student's thinking processes before, during, and after learning. Students reflect on their own learning and make adjustments in their thinking or behaviour to achieve deeper understanding. This self-regulation is critical in developing the independent, self-directed learning skills that students must acquire to thrive in the ever-changing world. For further information on formative and summative assessment, see the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth document *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind: Assessment* for *Learning, Assessment* as *Learning, Assessment* of *Learning* (2006).

** In this document, the term "parents" refers to both parents and guardians, and is used with the recognition that in some cases only one parent may be involved in a child's education.

SECTION 2:
CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT

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CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT

Formative Assessment

The term "formative assessment" is not new, but its definition is changing based on research on how assessment enhances learning. When the term first became part of the language of educators in the 1960s, it referred to assessment that took place mostly after learning activities were completed, leading to adjustments to the teaching and learning process to redress areas of weakness.

With new research and increasing collaboration on assessment initiatives among international educational bodies, the definition has expanded. We now view formative assessment as information that is used to move learners forward and is gathered by the teacher and the student during, as well as after, the learning process. This external assessment *for* learning, done by the teacher, fosters an internal assessment *as* learning on the part of the student.

Research has found that the following strategies are most powerful when teachers use them to inform and adapt their instruction:

- clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success
- engineering effective classroom discussions, questions, and learning tasks
- providing feedback that moves learners forward
- activating students as the owners of their own learning
- activating students as instructional resources for one another (Leahy et al. 18)

The active engagement of students is an essential element of assessment that makes a positive difference in student learning. To become independent learners, students need to get an idea from the start of what is to be learned. Therefore, the teacher needs to explain the learning outcomes targeted, and have the students participate in

- setting criteria
- identifying performance indicators
- obtaining feedback from others (peers and teacher)
- further clarifying the criteria

Teachers model assessment of a performance or product against the established criteria for quality work. Students then practise comparing work to these established criteria by providing themselves and others with feedback as they reflect on their own work and the work of their peers.

Teachers further support students by helping them to revise their work and move it closer to the established criteria. Students accomplish this by using their own personal feedback, as well as feedback from their peers and teachers. Ultimately, through this modelling of practice, assessing against criteria, and using feedback to adjust understanding and performance, students learn not only to self-assess but also to

- understand the criteria better
- self-regulate their learning
- determine their next steps

These are critical steps in becoming independent, lifelong learners.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is part of regular classroom-based assessment and is designed to confirm how well students are meeting the targeted learning outcomes. This assessment of learning provides evidence of achievement to students, parents, other educators, and possibly to outside groups.

For the Middle Years assessment, individual reporting will be done for the student, the parents, and the Department.

Resources Supporting Classroom-Based Assessment

Allal, Linda, and Lucie Mottier Lopez. "Formative Assessment of Learning: A Review of Publications in French." *Formative Assessment: Improving Learning in Secondary Classrooms.* Paris, FR: OECD Publishing, 2005. 241-265.

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---. *Educative Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Inc., 1998.

Wiggins, Grant P., and Jay McTighe. *Understanding by Design*. San Francisco, CA: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1998.

SECTION 3:
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GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Rationale for the Selection of Key Competencies in English Language Arts

The concept that all learning is mediated by language is a foundational premise of education. In classrooms, reading and writing play a major part in learning all subject areas, not only the language arts. Writing is a way of presenting ideas in a form that others may understand. Writing also fosters learning by allowing the writers to analyze their work and to clarify their thinking. Being able to read and understand others' ideas and being able to write one's own ideas for others to understand are essential skills for success in school and in society.

The selection of **reading comprehension** and **expository writing** as key competencies for the Middle Years Assessment Policy supports the view that learning is mediated by language and is intended to ensure that students are developing the necessary language skills for success in and out of school.

This section of the document provides information about and tools for assisting educators in completing the Provincial Reports on Student Performance in Grade 8 English language arts. These tools include:

- samples of reporting templates
- exemplars of student work demonstrating various levels of performance in tasks designed to help students meet identified competencies in reading comprehension and expository writing
- suggested resources and sample strategies and tools for supporting the development of competencies in the Grade 8 classroom

Provincial Reports on Student Performance

In Grade 8 English language arts, the Provincial Reports on Student Performance include the following information:

- the key competencies for both reading comprehension and expository writing, which are the same for the English, French Immersion, and Français Programs
- the three levels of performance: not meeting, approaching, and meeting
- criteria for each level of performance

Samples of reporting templates for reading comprehension and for expository writing are provided on the following pages for the English, French Immersion, and Français Programs. Teachers and students have an opportunity to comment on the reports in the space provided at the bottom of the reporting templates. This option permits teachers to add comments if circumstances warrant. It also allows students to reflect on the first half of the school year and to set goals for the second half. As a result, the summative information on the report can be used for the formative purpose of improving student performance, not only for evaluating it.

Reporting Template

English Program
January 20___

Provincial Report on Student Performance
Grade 8
Reading Comprehension

Student Name:_____
☐ Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Competency	Levels of Performance		
Student comprehends a variety of grade-level texts (fiction and non-fiction).	**Not Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Approaching Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**
Student understands key ideas and messages in a variety of texts.	☐ Demonstrates a limited understanding of key ideas and messages.	☐ Understands key ideas and messages more easily in some texts than in others.	☐ Understands key ideas and messages in familiar and unfamiliar texts.
Student interprets a variety of texts.	☐ Demonstrates a limited ability to make connections between texts and prior knowledge or to draw conclusions.	☐ Interprets texts, with familiar content or forms, by connecting with prior knowledge to make inferences and to draw conclusions.	☐ Interprets a variety of texts by connecting reading with prior knowledge to make inferences and to draw conclusions.
Student responds critically to a variety of texts.	☐ Expresses personal opinions with limited support from texts and other sources.	☐ Develops own ideas and point of view with some support from texts.	☐ Selects and integrates information, ideas, and points of view from texts and other sources to expand and support thinking.

Comments (optional)

Teacher Signature: _____

Student Reflections and Goals (optional)

SAMPLE

Manitoba

Reporting Template

English Program
January 20___

Provincial Report on Student Performance
Grade 8
Expository Writing

Student Name:_____
☐ Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Competency	Levels of Performance		
Student writes expository texts for a variety of audiences and purposes (to inform, describe, explain, persuade, state an opinion, etc.).	**Not Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Approaching Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**
Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.	☐ Ideas are undeveloped or off topic; no overall organization (opening, body, conclusions) is employed.	☐ Ideas are adequate and on topic; overall organization is evident; inconsistent organization of supporting details.	☐ Ideas are on topic and well developed; organization of details supports the reader's understanding.
Student chooses language (word choices and sentence patterns) to make an impact on the reader.	☐ Word choices and sentence patterns result in little or no impact on the reader.	☐ Word choices and sentence patterns have some impact on the reader.	☐ Word choices and sentence patterns have a definite impact on the reader.
Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.	☐ Frequent spelling and grammatical errors detract from the understanding of texts.	☐ Errors in use of conventions detract from overall impression, but the meaning is evident.	☐ Conventions are applied consistently; errors may exist but do not affect meaning or overall impact.
Comments (optional) **Teacher Signature:** _____		**Student Reflections and Goals (optional)**	

SAMPLE

Manitoba

Reporting Template

French Immersion Program
January 20___

Provincial Report on Student Performance
Grade 8
Reading Comprehension

Student Name:_____
☐ Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Competency	Levels of Performance		
Student comprehends a variety of grade-level texts (fiction and non-fiction).	**Not Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Approaching Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**
Student understands key ideas and messages in a variety of texts.	☐ Demonstrates a limited understanding of key ideas and messages.	☐ Understands key ideas and messages more easily in some texts than in others.	☐ Understands key ideas and messages in familiar and unfamiliar texts.
Student interprets a variety of texts.	☐ Demonstrates a limited ability to make connections between texts and prior knowledge or to draw conclusions.	☐ Interprets texts, with familiar content or forms, by connecting with prior knowledge to make inferences and to draw conclusions.	☐ Interprets a variety of texts by connecting reading with prior knowledge to make inferences and to draw conclusions.
Student responds critically to a variety of texts.	☐ Expresses personal opinions with limited support from texts and other sources.	☐ Develops own ideas and point of view with some support from texts.	☐ Selects and integrates information, ideas, and points of view from texts and other sources to expand and support thinking.

Comments (optional)

Teacher Signature: _____

Student Reflections and Goals (optional)

Manitoba

SAMPLE

Reporting Template

French Immersion Program
January 20___

Provincial Report on Student Performance
Grade 8
Expository Writing

Student Name:_____
☐ Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Competency	Levels of Performance		
Student writes expository texts for a variety of audiences and purposes (to inform, describe, explain, persuade, state an opinion, etc.).	**Not Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Approaching Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**	**Meeting Mid-Grade 8 Level of Performance**
Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.	☐ Ideas are undeveloped or off topic; no overall organization (opening, body, conclusions) is employed.	☐ Ideas are adequate and on topic; overall organization is evident; inconsistent organization of supporting details.	☐ Ideas are on topic and well developed; organization of details supports the reader's understanding.
Student chooses language (word choices and sentence patterns) to make an impact on the reader.	☐ Word choices and sentence patterns result in little or no impact on the reader.	☐ Word choices and sentence patterns have some impact on the reader.	☐ Word choices and sentence patterns have a definite impact on the reader.
Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.	☐ Frequent spelling and grammatical errors detract from the understanding of texts.	☐ Errors in use of conventions detract from overall impression, but the meaning is evident.	☐ Conventions are applied consistently; errors may exist but do not affect meaning or overall impact.
Comments (optional) **Teacher Signature:** _____		**Student Reflections and Goals (optional)**	

Manitoba

Reporting Template

Programme scolaire français
Janvier 20___

Rapport provincial sur la performance de l'élève
8e année
Compréhension en lecture en anglais (*Reading Comprehension*)

Nom de l'élève : _____
❑ Plan éducatif personnalisé (PEP)

Compétence	Niveaux de performance		
L'élève comprend une variété de textes (fiction et non-fiction).	**N'atteint pas le niveau de performance de la mi-8e année**	**Atteint presque le niveau de performance de la mi-8e année**	**Atteint le niveau de performance de la mi-8e année**
L'élève comprend les idées clés et les messages dans une variété de textes.	☐ démontre une compréhension partielle des idées clés et des messages	☐ comprend les idées clés et les messages plus facilement dans certains textes que d'autres	☐ comprend les idées clés et les messages dans les textes familiers et non-familiers
L'élève interprète une variété de textes.	☐ a une capacité limitée d'établir des liens entre les textes et ses connaissances antérieures ou de tirer des conclusions	☐ interprète les textes, ayant des contenus et des formes familiers, en établissant des liens avec ses connaissances antérieures pour faire des inférences et tirer des conclusions	☐ interprète une variété de textes en établissant des liens entre ses lectures et ses connaissances antérieures pour faire des inférences et tirer des conclusions
L'élève réagit de façon critique à une variété de textes.	☐ exprime des opinions personnelles appuyées, de façon limitée, par des textes et d'autres sources	☐ développe ses idées et son point de vue en s'appuyant, en partie, sur les textes	☐ sélectionne et assemble les informations, les idées et les points de vues des textes et des autres sources afin de développer et d'appuyer sa réflexion
Commentaires (optionnel) **Signature de l'enseignante ou de l'enseignant** _____	**Réflexions et buts de l'élève (optionnel)**		

SAMPLE

Manitoba

Reporting Template

Programme scolaire français
Janvier 20___

Rapport provincial sur la performance de l'élève
8e année
Écriture de textes informatifs en anglais (*Expository Writing*)

Nom de l'élève :_____
❑ Plan éducatif personnalisé (PEP)

Compétence	Niveaux de performance		
L'élève écrit une variété de textes informatifs (pour informer, décrire, expliquer, persuader, exprimer son opinion, etc.) en tenant compte de la situation de communication.	**N'atteint pas le niveau de performance de la mi-8e année**	**Atteint presque le niveau de performance de la mi-8e année**	**Atteint le niveau de performance de la mi-8e année**
L'élève génère, choisit et organise des idées qui facilitent la compréhension du lecteur.	❑ idées peu développées ou sans lien avec le sujet; manque d'organisation dans l'ensemble (introduction, développement, conclusion)	❑ idées suffisantes et pertinentes; organisation évidente de l'ensemble; manque de cohérence dans l'organisation des détails	❑ idées pertinentes et bien développées; organisation des détails facilitent la compréhension du lecteur
L'élève choisit des mots et des structures de phrases qui auront un impact sur le lecteur.	❑ mots et structures de phrases ont peu ou pas d'impact sur le lecteur	❑ mots et structures de phrases ont un certain impact sur le lecteur	❑ mots et structures de phrases ont un impact bien arrêté sur le lecteur
L'élève utilise les règles de la langue (orthographe d'usage et orthographe grammaticale) et d'autres ressources (correcteurs, dictionnaires, etc.) pour réviser et corriger afin de rendre ses idées compréhensibles.	❑ erreurs fréquentes qui distraient et entravent la compréhension des textes	❑ erreurs distraient et affectent l'impression générale mais n'empêchent pas la compréhension	❑ règles appliquées de façon systématique; il peut y avoir des erreurs mais celles-ci n'affectent pas la compréhension ou l'impact du texte dans son ensemble
Commentaires (optionnel)		**Réflexions et buts de l'élève (optionnel)**	

Signature de l'enseignante ou de l'enseignant _____

SAMPLE

Manitoba

Exemplars of Student Work

Exemplars of student work are reproduced on the following pages to help teachers complete the Provincial Report on Student Performance in Grade 8 English language arts. They apply to the English, French Immersion, and Français Programs. The exemplars are intended to help ensure that teachers across the province are using the same standards and that student performance data are reliable. They may also be used with students as models and with parents to help them understand the Middle Years Assessment Policy.

The exemplars in this document are intended only to illustrate the competencies and specific levels of performance outlined in the Provincial Report on Student Performance.

A wide variety of classroom activities are to be used to collect evidence, over time, of student growth in these competencies. The exemplars were generated as students participated in specific classroom activities. However, it is not intended that these activities be replicated by others in order to collect samples of student performance.

The exemplars included in this section are based on two different classrooms where students practised and refined their skills in reading comprehension and expository writing. One is an Internet-based mini-inquiry on the annual harp seal hunt in Eastern Canada, while the other is a character study based on a traditional novel. The exemplars are intended to illustrate how classroom teachers gather evidence of student progress over time, based on a wide variety of day-to-day assignments, ranging from an informal journal entry to a formal piece of polished writing.

Exemplars representing the three levels of performance (not meeting, approaching, and meeting) are provided for each reading comprehension and expository writing competency identified on the Provincial Report on Student Performance:

- **Reading Comprehension Exemplars:** The exemplars for specified reading comprehension tasks are organized under the following headings to correspond with each identified competency:
  - — Key Ideas
  - — Interpretation
  - — Critical Response
- **Expository Writing Exemplars:** The exemplars for specified expository writing tasks are organized under the following headings to correspond with each identified competency:
  - — Ideas
  - — Language
  - — Conventions

Each exemplar includes the following components:

- **Competency:** A specific reading comprehension or expository writing competency is identified for each exemplar.
- **Description of the Task:** The specific task assigned to the student provides a context for the exemplar.
- **Exemplar:** The actual student work demonstrates a specific level of performance: not meeting, approaching, or meeting.
- **Rationale for Assigned Level:** Notes on why the sample was assessed at a particular level of performance are recorded here. These points are thoughts a teacher might jot down about the student's work; they are not meant to be prescriptive or complete.
- **Possible Next Steps:** Ideas or thoughts on potential strategies or tools that the teacher or student may employ to improve the student's future performance are noted here.

While the exemplars have been word processed for ease of reading, they reflect the students' original work, including errors.

The exemplars of student work are followed by suggested strategies and tools that teachers may find useful when working with their students in supporting some "possible next steps" in reading comprehension and expository writing within the Grade 8 classroom. The accompanying chart provides specific curricular connections and links to departmental publications containing detailed descriptions of the suggested strategies and tools.

A list of suggested student reading materials is also included in this section to illustrate the wide range of materials that are used in Grade 8 classrooms across the province for instructional purposes. This is not an exclusive list; it is meant only to demonstrate the range of possibilities.

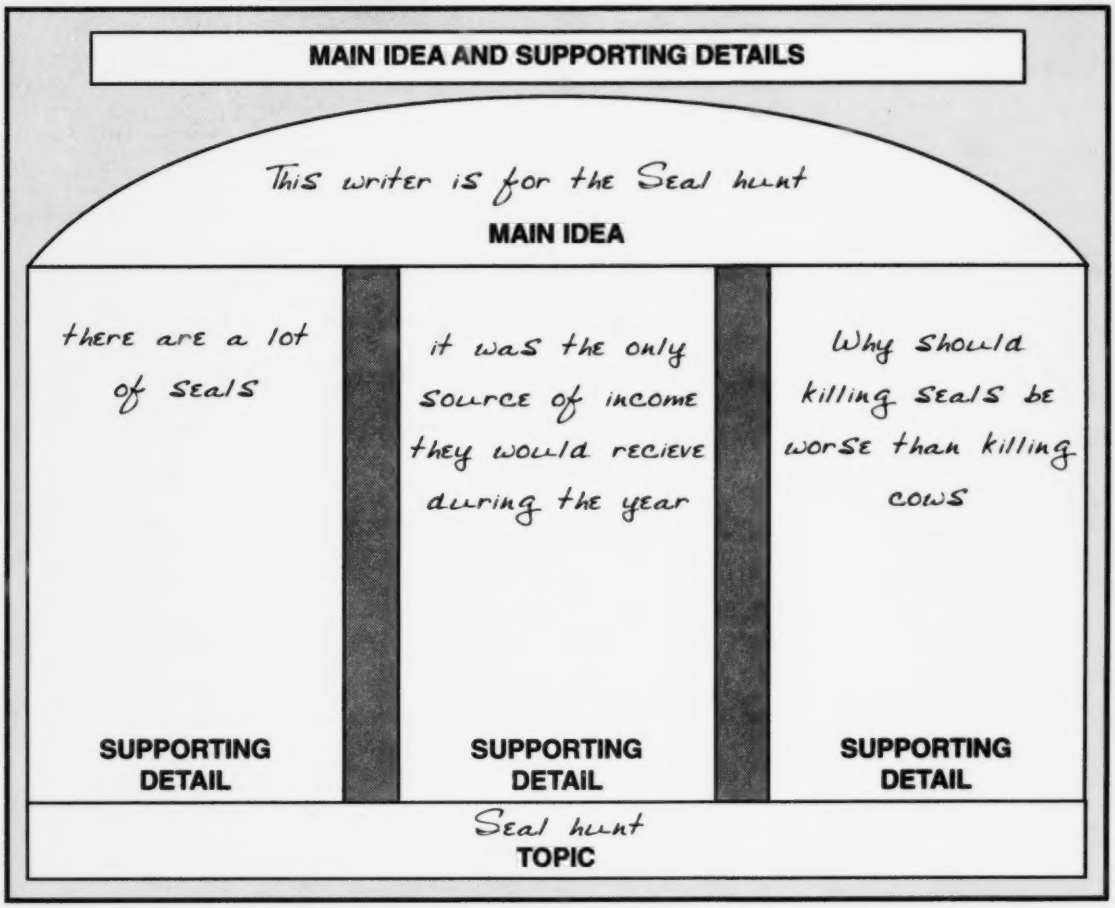
Additional resources, including resources supporting English language arts and resources supporting Anglais and English language arts—Immersion, are also cited at the end of this section.

Key Ideas Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student understands key ideas and messages in a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After pre-reading activities (e.g., Word Splash, Picture Splash, Know, Want to Know, Learned [KWL], Anticipation Guide) on the seal hunt controversy, students were asked to read a letter to the editor, identify the main idea, and summarize the supporting details. A graphic organizer was provided.

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**


MAIN IDEA AND SUPPORTING DETAILS
This writer is for the Seal hunt
MAIN IDEA
there are a lot of seals
it was the only source of income they would recieve during the year
Why should killing seals be worse than killing cows
SUPPORTING DETAIL
SUPPORTING DETAIL
SUPPORTING DETAIL
Seal hunt
TOPIC

Rationale for Assigned Level: Did not grasp main idea. Ability to identify supporting arguments was minimal.

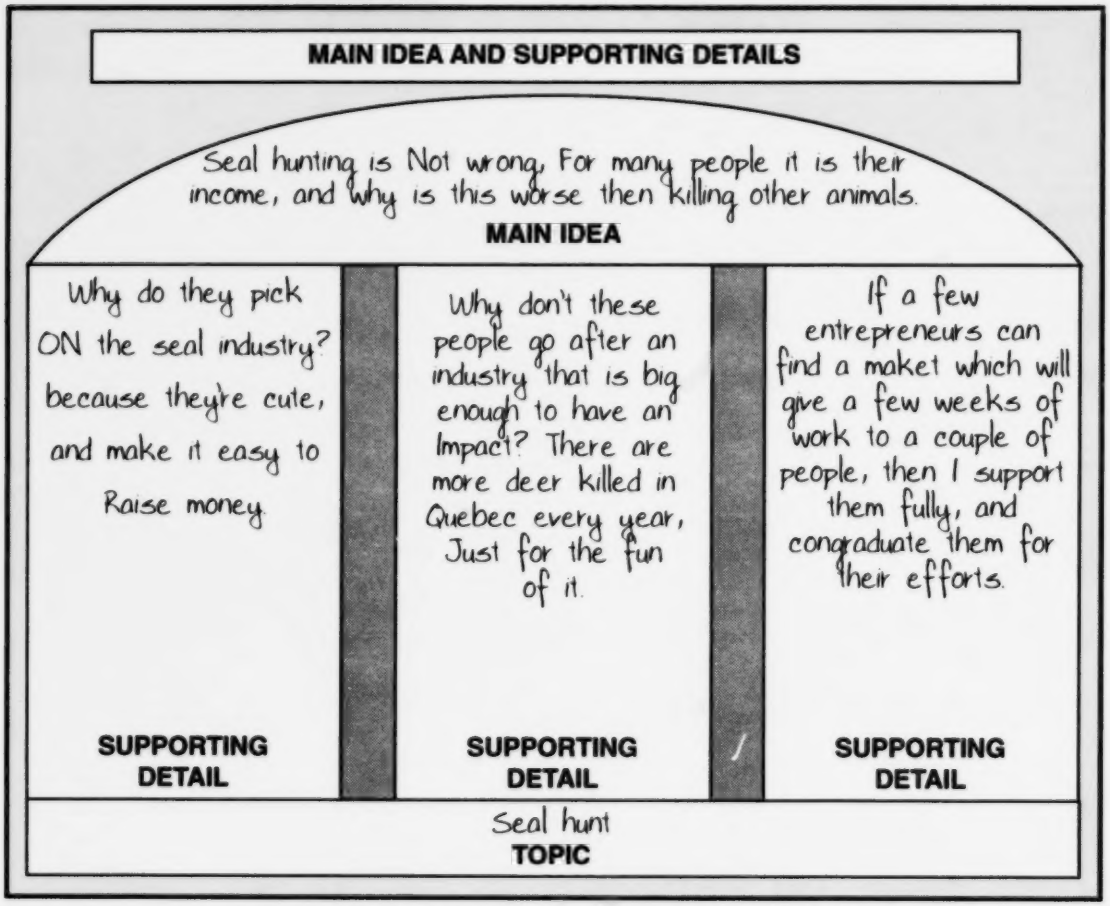
Possible Next Steps: Review relationship between main ideas and supporting details in persuasive writing.

Key Ideas Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student understands key ideas and messages in a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After pre-reading activities (e.g., Word Splash, Picture Splash, Know, Want to Know, Learned [KWL], Anticipation Guide) on the seal hunt controversy, students were asked to read a letter to the editor, identify the main idea, and summarize the supporting details. A graphic organizer was provided.

Approaching **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**


MAIN IDEA AND SUPPORTING DETAILS
Seal hunting is Not wrong, For many people it is their income, and why is this worse then killing other animals.
MAIN IDEA
Why do they pick ON the seal industry? because they're cute, and make it easy to Raise money.
SUPPORTING DETAIL
Why don't these people go after an industry that is big enough to have an Impact? There are more deer killed in Quebec every year, Just for the fun of it.
SUPPORTING DETAIL
If a few entrepreneurs can find a maket which will give a few weeks of work to a couple of people, then I support them fully, and congraduate them for their efforts.
SUPPORTING DETAIL
Seal hunt
TOPIC

Rationale for Assigned Level: Main idea not clearly identified. Supporting details are not clear; stated as questions.

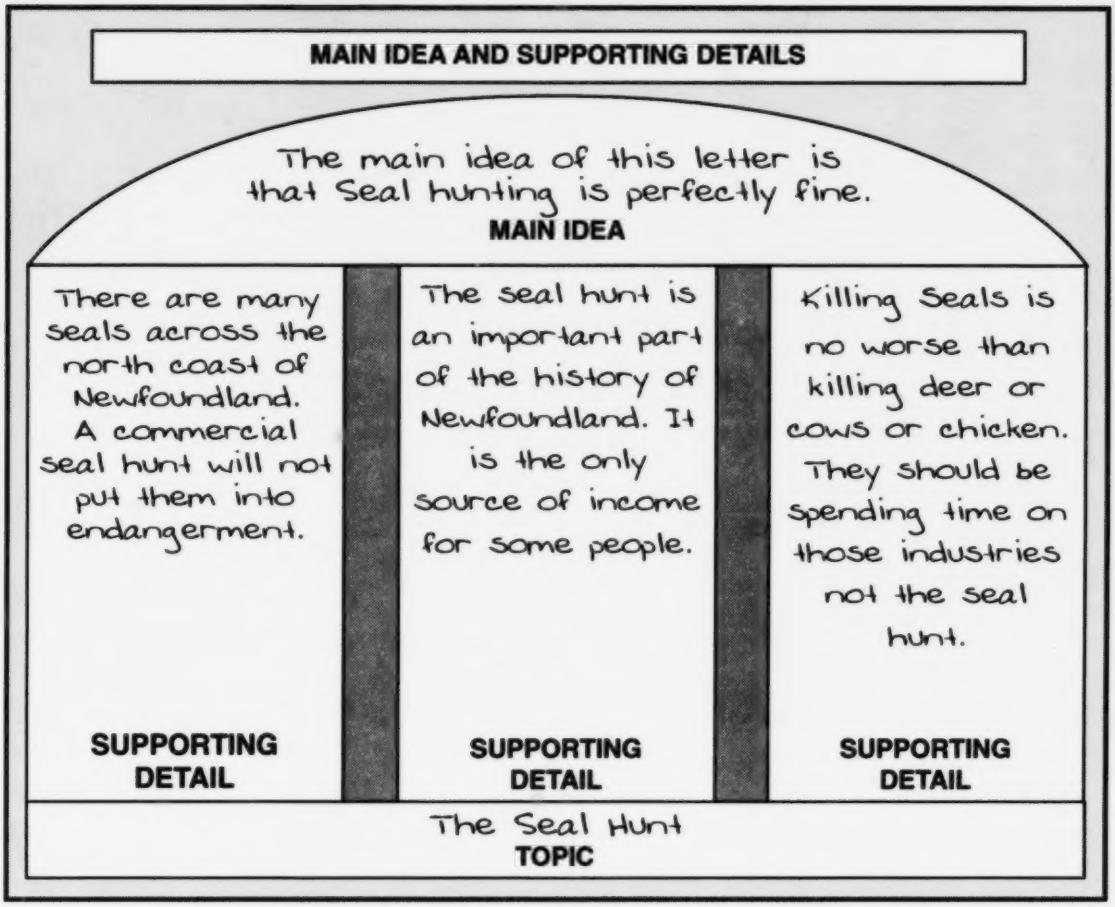
Possible Next Steps: Review idea of thesis statement and relationship of supporting ideas to thesis statement in persuasive writing.

Key Ideas Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student understands key ideas and messages in a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After pre-reading activities (e.g., Word Splash, Picture Splash, Know, Want to Know, Learned [KWL], Anticipation Guide) on the seal hunt controversy, students were asked to read a letter to the editor, identify the main idea, and summarize the supporting details. A graphic organizer was provided.

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**


MAIN IDEA AND SUPPORTING DETAILS
The main idea of this letter is that Seal hunting is perfectly fine.
MAIN IDEA
There are many seals across the north coast of Newfoundland. A commercial seal hunt will not put them into endangerment.
SUPPORTING DETAIL
The seal hunt is an important part of the history of Newfoundland. It is the only source of income for some people.
SUPPORTING DETAIL
Killing Seals is no worse than killing deer or cows or chicken. They should be spending time on those industries not the seal hunt.
SUPPORTING DETAIL
The Seal Hunt
TOPIC

Rationale for Assigned Level: Clear and accurate summary of key arguments and main idea provided.

Possible Next Steps: Discuss how this graphic organizer could be used for pre-writing and not just for summarizing someone else's ideas.

Interpretation Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student interprets a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After an introduction to the seal hunt controversy and after reading a variety of texts about the hunt, students were asked to read a letter to the editor and respond by either agreeing or disagreeing with the writer. Reasons for their position were required.

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

I disagree with the author and, I would say that the person who wrote that article is for the seal hunt, and is trying to justify it by showing us other examples of how we slaughter animals, and how this is no worse then anything else weve done. I beleive this is not right, and just because we slaughter other animals doesn't make it right to slaughter even more.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Only literal understanding of the text is evident. Presents an opinion but makes little or no connection to evidence in text.

Possible Next Steps: Use graphic organizer to identify author's point of view and arguments. Have student discuss each one separately.

Interpretation Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student interprets a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After an introduction to the seal hunt controversy and after reading a variety of texts about the hunt, students were asked to read a letter to the editor and respond by either agreeing or disagreeing with the writer. Reasons for their position were required.

Approaching **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear editer,

I agree with the writer that seal hunting should be O.K. As he stated in his first paragraph that they are the largest herd off the north coast of Newfoundland. In his second paragraph he said seal hunting is a proud part of Newfoundland and if there is no more seal hunting not many people will have Jobs. In his 3rd paragraph he said "Why should seal hunting be any different than killing chicken or deer?" There is no difference. People are just focusing on seals and not on different animals. These are the reasons I think seal hunting is OK.

the end!

Rationale for Assigned Level: Retells author's opinion and arguments. Makes no reference to any other sources.

Possible Next Steps: Discuss other evidence and possible points of view. Extend thinking to include other sources.

Interpretation Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student interprets a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After an introduction to the seal hunt controversy and after reading a variety of texts about the hunt, students were asked to read a letter to the editor and respond by either agreeing or disagreeing with the writer. Reasons for their position were required.

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

I THINK THAT ONLY INUIT PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO HUNT. BUT ONLY DURING SEASON AND THAT THERE WOULD BE A LIMIT TOO.

MY FIRST REASON IS BECAUSE THEIR CULTURE GREW UP LEAURING TO DEPEND ON THE SEALS, AND UNLIKE SEAL FISHERMEN THEY USE ALL PARTS OF THE SEAL, WHILE SEAL FISHERMEN, ONLY USE THE SKIN AND FAT.

ANOTHER REASON IS THAT IF YOU HAVE EVERY ONE HUNTING THEM, THE POPULATION WILL DECREASE RAPIDLY AND WITH PREATORS HUNTING THEM, AND GLOBAL WARMING, WE MIGHT JUST DRIVE THESE CREATURS TO EXTINCTION.

MY FINAL REASON IS EVEN THOUGH MOST OF NEWFOUNDLAND WILL GO OUT OF BUSINESS, I THINK THAT IF WE USED THE MONEY THAT WERE GIVING TO THEM TO START UP COULD GO TOWARDS SETTING UP NEW JOBS AND OR MOVING PEOPLE TO DIFFERENT PROVINCES WHERE THEY WOULD HAVE A BETTER CHANCE AT GETTING A JOB.

IN THE END I HOPE YOU SEE THAT SEAL HUNTING IS BAD BUT THE INUIT PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE ABLE TO HUNT THEM BECAUSE THEY HAVE HUNTED THEM FOR MANY YEARS.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Draws conclusions, makes connections between several sources, and integrates information to form a unique personal response.

Possible Next Steps: Discuss effectiveness of citing and refuting other points of view as a technique in persuading others.

Critical Response Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student responds critically to a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After a mini-inquiry into the seal hunt controversy, students were asked to formulate a personal position and provide support for it. The format required was a draft letter to the editor.

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Seal Hunt

I believe it should be stoped.

First of all I dont like how they sneak up behind the baby seal to kill them.

Second seals can't defend them selfs

Third seals should live since we wouldn't want to get hunted.

I conclude that seals shouldn't be killed. It is wrong to kill seals

Rationale for Assigned Level: Gives entirely personal response, with no evidence to support position.

Possible Next Steps: Use graphic organizer (Venn diagram) to show arguments and information for, against, and neutral. Then ask student to state a position using evidence from the Venn diagram.

Critical Response Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student responds critically to a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After a mini-inquiry into the seal hunt controversy, students were asked to formulate a personal position and provide support for it. The format required was a draft letter to the editor.

Approaching **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear Editor,

Ban the seal hunt? Yes!

My first reason against the seal hunt is that there may be millions of Harp seals, but when people start killing them, there may become minimal Harp Seals, and soon they could become extinct.

Second, everyone thinks that the seals eat all the cod fish, but its not entirely true. Seals still need to eat cod fish, but what about the fishermen who take their big nets, and bring in tons of cod fish at a time. No one is stopping them, so why choose to stop the seals?

Third, what about the seal you kill? Do people not think that they have families? kids? Moms and Dads? Imagine someone going into your home and taking your family away, because that is what the seal hunt is doing to those seal families.

Finally, yes, it may be less cruel than killing cows and chickens, but there are people all around the world who depend on cows and chickens for meals, but there is one province who needs the seals for money. So ask yourself, is it really less cruel?

Rationale for Assigned Level: Some support from other sources is evident. However, some very personal unsupported arguments are used.

Possible Next Steps: Discuss difference between what we know and how we feel about an issue. Use of graphic organizer showing differences may help.

Critical Response Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student responds critically to a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After a mini-inquiry into the seal hunt controversy, students were asked to formulate a personal position and provide support for it. The format required was a draft letter to the editor.

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE *(Example 1)***

Dear editor,

My opinion is that we should ban seal hunting.

My first reason is that we humans destroy everything. If we stop seal hunting now we won't have to struggle later to keep the seals alive.

My second reason is we are killing thousands from global warming. Because of global warming, the ice is melting so the babies fall through the ice and die.

My last reason is that it is not necessary for the economy. They should stop hunting seals and start trying to save the fish.

These are my reasons that I hope can save the seals.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Argument is a unique synthesis of many sources.

Possible Next Steps: Work with student to expand supporting evidence.

Critical Response Reading Comprehension Exemplar

Competency: Student responds critically to a variety of texts.

Description of the Task: After a mini-inquiry into the seal hunt controversy, students were asked to formulate a personal position and provide support for it. The format required was a draft letter to the editor.

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**
(Example 2: English as an Additional Language Student)

The Seal hunt

I both agree and disagree with the Seal hunt. This are my thougts:

I think the Inuit people have the right to keep hunting the seals because it's their culture and they have done it for hundreds of years.

I think that the Inuit people should kill a specific amount of seals each year, acording to the numbers of cod fish that are alive. If the numbers are decreasing, they should kill more seals. If the numbers are rising, the should kill less seals.

Finally I think that the government of Canada should give the non-Inuit people some money to buy everything they need for their fishing season: instead of them killing seals.

After reading some articles and thinking about it, those were my thougts and I think they would be good to solve the problems of the Seal Hunt.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Unique arguments presented. Multiple sources used.

Possible Next Steps: Work on expanding arguments by including more details, examples, etc.

Ideas Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.

Description of the Task: As part of the mini-inquiry into the harp seal controversy, students were asked to read a series of letters to the editor, facts about harp seals, and websites from various groups involved (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals [PETA], Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, The Humane Society of the United States). After class discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes, and the use of various graphic organizers for different kinds of arguments, students were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their opinion of the seal hunt and providing arguments to persuade readers to agree.

First Draft

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear Editor,

My opinion is simple the Seal Hunt should continue. Because everybody should leave it to Canada. The only reaso PETA is involved is so they can get lots of fund raising money, and notice how on all of there picet signs it shows pictures of Baby seals (they have been illigal to kill for over 20 years). Canada should be alowed to solve this on there own, without PETA, Paul McCartny and Pam anderson Its not like its worse than what we do to cows of chickens. there are literaly millions of them out there and PETA says there going extinct (ya right) I agree with the seal hunt completely

Rationale for Assigned Level: Ideas are there, but shows no evidence of either overall or internal organization.

Possible Next Steps: Review relationship between main idea and supporting details. Review overall structure (beginning, middle, end).

Ideas Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.

Description of the Task: As part of the mini-inquiry into the harp seal controversy, students were asked to read a series of letters to the editor, facts about harp seals, and websites from various groups involved (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals [PETA], Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, The Humane Society of the United States). After class discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes, and the use of various graphic organizers for different kinds of arguments, students were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their opinion of the seal hunt and providing arguments to persuade readers to agree.

First Draft

Approaching **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear Editor,

I don't really know if I'm against or for. What's the big deal it's Newfoundlands problem. I don't know because of three things.

First, the seals are cute. They don't do anything to us. All they do is eat some fish to live. If we kill the seals we are losing a part of the nature in Newfoundland and the coast lines.

Second, we should study the seals. See how many there actully is and limit their license. We might only have 2000 left, we don't really know. Famous people that live in America, London and other places leave this problem to Canada. IT'S NOT YOUR PROBLEM.

Thirdly, why are we ruining Newfoundlanders lifes. They do this to make money to fish. If we cancel the seal hunt people are losing jobs. The people won't be able to find another job. Think about what we are doing.

That is why I don't know what we should do. Leave it to the goverment and Newfoundland. Either way we are losing seals or losing peoples jobs. So Canada think what we are doing.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Overall organization is evident but paragraph structure shows little internal organization. Thesis only clear at the end.

Possible Next Steps: Review how graphic organizers can help clarify thinking and tighten up organization before writing a draft.

Ideas Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.

Description of the Task: As part of the mini-inquiry into the harp seal controversy, students were asked to read a series of letters to the editor, facts about harp seals, and websites from various groups involved (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals [PETA], Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, The Humane Society of the United States). After class discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes, and the use of various graphic organizers for different kinds of arguments, students were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their opinion of the seal hunt and providing arguments to persuade readers to agree.

First Draft

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**
(English as an Additional Language Student)

Dear Editor,

I believe that we should stop all this raccas that the Media is so drawn to.

For one, people such as Paul McCartney and Pamela Anderson are clouding our ability to really consider our actions, and make the right decision—they should BACK OFF, and stop using their names to get their way.

Secondly, theirs the "Unemployment issue," to consider. For many, sealing is their only income and more deer, cows, chickens and other animals are killed every year, is seal hunting really any worse?

Thirdly, there is also the seal population to look at. Unfortunatley, seals have a large number of predators, and a high death rate for their young. Adding to that is global warming—it's eating away at the seals home, and causing the death toll to rise even further.

Will humans tip the scale in the seals future? Will we drive them into extinction, let them perish on their own, or actually do something about this seal hunt? Canada (no, not the media) should step back, take a deep breath, and really consider all parts of this dilema, and take a logical course of action.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Overall organization and structure within paragraphs evident. Ideas focused and congruent.

Possible Next Steps: Review various types of graphic organizers and how the student could use them to develop supporting arguments further before writing.

Language Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student chooses language (word choices and sentence patterns) to make an impact on the reader.

Description of the Task: Mini-inquiry. After reading letters to the editor, book excerpts, and websites from various groups regarding the seal hunt controversy, students took part in discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes. They were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their personal opinion about the hunt. Their purpose was to persuade readers to agree with their point of view.

First Draft

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear Editor

The Seal Hunt can be a good thing and even a bad thing. I'm not saying I'am against it but I'm not saying I'm for it either.

The seal hunt is a good thing because most of the seals are used for good things. They are used for food, clothing, etc.

Killing seals is another reason because when your from New Foundland it is important to kill them because that's how some people get there money from.

It is a bad thing to kill because seals are living things, too. They do have feelings too. Seals eat and breath too.

If people keep killing seals, sooner or later they will become extinct and there will be nothing left of them.

I think that people should try to learn more about the seals before they kill them.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Vocabulary choices are very simple. Each idea is listed in a separate paragraph. No transitions used. Repetitive.

Possible Next Steps: Introduce/review idea that you need powerful language to persuade readers. Generate synonym lists. Review overall structure.

Language Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student chooses language (word choices and sentence patterns) to make an impact on the reader.

Description of the Task: Mini-inquiry. After reading letters to the editor, book excerpts, and websites from various groups regarding the seal hunt controversy, students took part in discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes. They were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their personal opinion about the hunt. Their purpose was to persuade readers to agree with their point of view.

First Draft

Approaching **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear, Editor

I believe the seal hunt should continue but to lower the amount of Harp Seals killed/caught per year.

First of all, there are millions of Harp Seals in the world. 350,000 harp seals are killed per season. My question is if that is really going to affect the millions.

Second of all, the people of Newfoundland depend on the Harp Seal killings to get their income. It wouldn't be right to take away many peoples jobs, considering Newfoundland already has the lowest employment rate in Canada and even possibly the whole world.

Finally, there are more cows, deer and chickens killed per year than Harp Seals. We should be focusing our attention on that, instead of the Harp Seals. Cows, deer and chickens suffer more than the Harp Seals do. Also cows, deer and chickens live a slave life, while harp seals live a long free life out in the wild, until that one quick moment when they are bashed on the head and skined. They do not go through any pain. Yet the ckickens and cows suffer much, much more.
Therefore, the seal hunt should continue due to the damage it would cause to the Newfoundlanders if it were to be banned.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Meaning is clear. Some interesting language (slave life) used. Sentences show developed ideas but not much variety.

Possible Next Steps: Review sentence variety. Use synonym lists as a tool to create more impact.

Language Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student chooses language (word choices and sentence patterns) to make an impact on the reader.

Description of the Task: Mini-inquiry. After reading letters to the editor, book excerpts, and websites from various groups regarding the seal hunt controversy, students took part in discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes. They were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their personal opinion about the hunt. Their purpose was to persuade readers to agree with their point of view.

First Draft

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear Editor,

I disagree with the seal hunt that is going on right now in Newfoundland. I think that, Sir Paul McCartney is doing the right thing in trying to stop this mass murder of seals. First of all this is a cruel and unusual punishment for the seals. Every year they go up onto the pack ice to mate, and every year thousands are clubbed off.. Literally! These poor seals are being hit over the head with clubs, that have a sharp nail on the bottom!

The second reason why I disagree with the seal hunt is that it is not needed for Newfoundland's economy. Many people use the seal hunt as quick money for a couple of weeks!

Lastly, if this seal hunting keeps up we won't have any left! What happened to the cod may eventually happen to our seals. DO we need these seals to become endangered just so we can stop this hunt? That's what we did to the cod!

Please learn from your mistakes people! Don't let the seals die out like the cod did! Save the seals!

Rationale for Assigned Level: Uses a variety of sentences (exclamatory, interrogative, declarative). Chooses some powerful language (mass murder).

Possible Next Steps: Work on leads that "grab" the reader's attention.

Conventions Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.

Description of the Task: Mini-inquiry. After reading letters to the editor, book excerpts, and websites from various groups regarding the seal hunt controversy, students took part in discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes. They were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their personal opinion about the hunt. Their purpose was to persuade readers to agree with their point of view.

First Draft

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Its Both

I Disagree with the seal hunt because seal are animals to and I dont think they would like to be hunted And It would be very mean to hunt them for no Reason because people dont Eat them. I also agree a little bit with the seal hunt Because the crash of the cod stock to 30 000 Jobs from people and If I wernt for the seal hunt this would keep on happaning

Rationale for Assigned Level: Many errors affect the reader's ability to get the intended meaning.

Possible Next Steps: Review capitalization rules. Review sentence structure (run-on sentences are a problem). Graphic organizers may help separate ideas before crafting sentences.

Conventions Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.

Description of the Task: Mini-inquiry. After reading letters to the editor, book excerpts, and websites from various groups regarding the seal hunt controversy, students took part in discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes. They were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their personal opinion about the hunt. Their purpose was to persuade readers to agree with their point of view.

First Draft

Approaching MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Dear, Editor

What's going on with the seal hunt? I beleive that it should stop. The seal hunt is very cruel especially if you use a gun because bullets don't always kill seals. If it doesn't then it may end up suffering. We should also stop it because they are being over hunted. If we continue to kill seals at this rate they will soon be extinct. Seal hunting is also bad because of global warming. Ever since this happened it has been harder for the seals moms to find thick enough ice to put there pups on. The last reason why I think it should stop is because when you kill older seals you are at the same time kind of killing pups. At least cutting down the chances of more babys. This is why we need to stop seal hunting.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Various errors are evident, but they do not affect meaning.

Possible Next Steps: Review "y" plurals, sentence fragments, and possessives. Review graphic organizers to separate ideas before writing.

Conventions Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.

Description of the Task: Mini-inquiry. After reading letters to the editor, book excerpts, and websites from various groups regarding the seal hunt controversy, students took part in discussions based on Word and Picture Splashes. They were asked to write a letter to the editor reflecting their personal opinion about the hunt. Their purpose was to persuade readers to agree with their point of view.

First Draft

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Dear Editor,

The seal hunt is ridiculous! Let's end it NOW! Firstly, the harp seal's numbers are already decreasing greatly because of global warming. Although there are still many seals, global warming and people butchering thousands and thousands every year will change that. Secondly, killing helpless seal's is just plain cruel! Murdering helpless animals just for fur and oil is horrible. Some people say that killing cows, pigs, and chicken is worse, but the difference is that we need those animals for food, not for fur, and blubber, which we don't need to live! Lastly, we do not have to use fur to stay warm and blubber oil for heating and lubricants. There are plenty of other things we can use instead of fur and blubber oil. The seal hunt is preposterous. Let's end it while we can!

Rationale for Assigned Level: Errors do not distract from impact or message. Demonstrates control of conventions.

Possible Next Steps: Review use of paragraphs and possessives.

Ideas Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

This piece of expository writing was developed using the entire writing process (pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading). Throughout the writing process, the student benefited from peer and teacher feedback.

Not Meeting MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Cue for Treason

Kit is an admirable character in the novel, Cue for Treason. Kit is a thirteen-year old girl who had ran away from home because she didn't want to marry Sir Philip, a very cruel man. Sir Philip wanted to marry her for her estate and inheritance money. Kit's role in the novel is to help Peter capture the conspirators and to help save the Queen from getting shot. In the novel it is shown that she is a good actress, brave, and determined.

Kit is a good actress. To show that she was a good actress when she was a girl who was pretending to be a boy who acted as a girl in many different plays. Kit had pretended to be a boy when she ran away so she wouldn't have to marry Sir Philip. She had been assigned one of the leading roles, Juliet, in one of the very popular plays, "Romeo and Juliet" due to her acting abilities. She had also pulled off acting as a distressed damsel to help Peter get back the play "Henry the Fifth" from the Yellow Gentleman also known as Sir David Vicars. These are the reasons why Kit is a good actress.

Kit shows that she is brave. Kit was brave when she had helped capture the conspirators with Peter knowing that she might be killed if she was caught. Another way was

when she helped save the Queen from getting shot by John Somers during the play "Henry the Fifth" when the cannon sound effect was to be shot. The Queen was going to be shot because Sir Philip was yet over the Queen be heading him in court one time. These are some of the other points that show that Kit is brave.

Kit is a very determined person when she sets her mind to it. An example of her determination is when she wanted to get into Mr. Desmond's Company when they were on the road but Peter didn't want her in the company. Kit had snuck onto the wagon and was able to d a curtsy while all the other boys just looked like a boys in skirts that couldn't do curtsies. She had also been able to change her charecter like it was nothing. Another example that shows that Kit is determined is when Peter and her were to save the Queen before John Somers shot her and Kit didn't show any signs of giving up. These examples show that Kit is a determined person in the novel.

It has been shown that Kit Kirkstone is a good actress, brave, and determined. Kit is a great character in the novel, Cue for Treason when she had captured the consipirators and helped save the Queen.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Often wanders off topic to retell plot points instead of making character analysis. Lacks transition language from topic to topic. Concluding paragraph is repetitive.

Possible Next Steps: Review, with the student, differences between plot and character. Review how transition or signal words can make it easier for readers to follow ideas. Discuss previous feedback on concluding paragraphs—not saying the same things as introductory paragraphs. Brainstorm ways of summarizing and addressing the significance of the topic. What conclusions did the student come to after studying Kit's character?

Ideas Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

This piece of expository writing was developed using the entire writing process (pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading). Throughout the writing process, the student benefited from peer and teacher feedback.

Approaching MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Sir Philip Morton

Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Sir Philip Morton foiled by acting troupe! Sir Philip Morton is the antagonist in the novel "Cue for Treason". Sir Philip is the villain of the story; therefore he has many dishonorable traits. Three of his traits he displays more often than the rest: ambition, calculation, and cruelty.

Sir Philip is an ambitious man, one of his only honorable traits. Sir Philip is one of the leaders in the treason plot, explained in the book. It is often shown that Sir Philip Morton is not satisfied with the position he holds in the government. He also never forgave the Queen for singeing him in court. This is proven when Peter overhears him talking to his fellow conspirators. Ambition is usually a good thing, but for Sir Philip Morton, it's just another bad trait.

Another trait Sir Philip possesses is that he is a very calculating man, only thinking of his greater gain. Furthermore, he doesn't seem to care who he hurts to get what he wants. Such an example is that he tried to marry Kit Kirkstone, one of the main characters in the novel, because she was going to inherit a beautiful estate when she became of age. Lastly, in the beginning of the book, Sir Philip Morton walled up the common lands, just so the

peasants, who had been using them for years, could not let there sheep graze there. This shows how greedy and calculating Sir Philip is.

Of all the bad traits and qualities Sir Philip has, this is the worst: cruelty. He will go to any length to find out what he wants to know, or to make sure certain people don't learn certain things, such as when Peter traveled to London to warn the Queen of the assassination attempt on her. Another example is that John Somers, the one who actually tried assonate the Queen, was to be killed so not to leave any witnesses if he was caught and tortured to give names. Furthermore, Sir Philip will even torture people to get information if he wants it badly enough. He planned to do just that when he captured Peter on the Island. Luckily, Peter escaped. Among many other things, Sir Philip Morton is a very cruel man.

In this essay three major points about Sir Philip have been explained: ambition, calculation and cruelty. Sir Philip is the antagonist is this story, created by the author to give the novel depth and interest. Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Sir Philip Morton and the other traitors are facing death at Tower Hill!

Rationale for Assigned Level: Organization overall and within paragraphs is evident. Ideas are not always on point. Ideas are repetitive (introduction/conclusion).

Possible Next Steps: Review how concluding paragraphs summarize the main arguments put forth in the body of the essay but need not be a copy of the introduction. Discuss the importance of ending in a powerful way in persuasive writing and addressing the significance of the topic. Ask where the student got the idea for using "Extra! Extra!" since it wasn't suggested in the feedback or included in the first draft.

Ideas Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student generates, selects, and organizes ideas to support the reader's understanding.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

This piece of expository writing was developed using the entire writing process (pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading). Throughout the writing process, the student benefited from peer and teacher feedback.

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

CUE FOR TRESON ESSAY

Imagine saving a country at the age of thirteen, let alone a life! Kit is a phenomenal character in the novel Cue For Treason. Kit plays the role of a girl that pretends to be a boy and in the end helps Peter on their mission to save the Queen and their country. In the novel it is shown that Kit is brave, loyal, and an extraordinary actress.

First of all, Kit demonstrates that she is very brave in the novel Cue For Treason. No matter what situation they get into, Kit would never leave Peter behind. For example, when Peter and Kit were besieged in the Virgin Mine, and Kit managed to get free, she still chose to stay behind and try to help Peter. Another example of Kit's bravery is that she never quit. Throughout all of the hardships that that they faced, like getting the play back and being robbed, she never showed any signs of giving up. For these reasons Kit is thought of as very brave.

Secondly, Kit's loyalty benefited many people and helped her and Peter succeed on their mission. One reason is that she went back to Cumberland even though she knew that it would be very dangerous. If Sir Philip had found Peter and Kit, then kit would have been married to Sir Philip and Peter most likely would have been thrown into jail. Next, Kit proves that she is loyal because she stayed with Peter

until the mission was completed. Not only did she stay with him the whole time but she helped out a lot too. In short, Kit is a genuinely loyal character.

Thirdly, an extraordinary actress would definitely describe Kit. To start things off, she was probably the best "male" actor they had ever seen. When she was part of the Desmond's company she always had an important women's role to play. Another example that shows that Kit is a good actress is when Kit and Peter attempt to steal back the play Henry The Fifth. While Peter was struggling to get to the top on the window in the yellow gentlemen's house, Kit made things easier by dressing up as the girl she was and pretending to be a damsel in distress. Thankfully, Kit and Peter were successful. Kit's acting skills really helped her and Peter on their mission.

Throughout the entire novel, Kit displays that she is brave, loyal, and an extraordinary actress. Kit is a phenomenal character in the novel Cue For Treason. She demonstrated that she was very brave when she attempted to help Peter in the Virgin Mine, and proved that she was loyal when she went back to Cumberland even though she knew it would be dangerous. She also showed that she was a very good actress when she fooled the yellow gentlemen into thinking that she was a damsel in distress. All of Kit's amazing qualities helped her and Peter succeed on their mission to stop the plot of treason.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Transition language is employed. Supporting details are congruent with main ideas. Organization is clear within paragraphs and overall.

Possible Next Steps: Extend character study to show how authors make characters come alive for readers. Discuss, with the student, how the use of transition language (a change suggested in the feedback) made the writing more effective or "reader friendly."

Language Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student chooses language (word choices and sentence patterns) to make an impact on the reader.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

This piece of expository writing was developed using the entire writing process (pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading). Throughout the writing process, the student benefited from peer and teacher feedback.

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Cue for Treason

A girl facing major danger, adventure and taking the biggest risk of her life during the sixteenth century. Kit Kirkstone is a very interesting person in the story Cue for Treason. She is brave, determined and proves to be a good judge of character, Kit is the female hero of the novel.

Kit shows bravery during the story when she bravely escapes Sir Philip Morton. He wants to marry her for her land and money. She is going to inherit it. Because girls are not allowed to act it was very hard for Kit to join an acting troupe. She does mange to pull it off by dressing up like a boy. Her bravery is also shown when she goes with Tom Boyd and Peter Brownrigg to the Peel Towers to find clues. They did this to stop the plan to kill the Queen. She also shows bravery when her and Peter manage to stop John Somers. He is the man who was going to kill the Queen. By fighting their way to get there. Kit shows she is brave in the novel Cue for Treason.

Kits' determination is shown in the novel. Her determination is shown when she stays with the acting troupe in their time of need because the weather was bad and the company had closed down. She also showed determination when Peter and her tried to stop the plan to

kill the Queen. Kits' determination helps all the other characters in the novel.

Kits' good judge of character is very clear and is shown many times in the novel. Her good judge of character is shown when she meets up with Peter and the acting troupe and realizes she can trust them. It is also shown when Kit sees Mr. Armthwaites' lies. Then she stops Peter from telling him anymore about the plan to kill the Queen and stopped him from ringing the bell to tell the house that he was in danger and that Peter and Kit were there. Her good judge of character is useful in the novel.

Kit is brave, determined and is a good judge of character. She is also a very good character during the sixteenth century. Kit is facing danger, adventure and is taking the biggest risks of her life. Kit is an important character in the story Cue for Treason.

Rationale for Assigned Level: No variety of sentences (mostly declarative, simple sentences) evident. No powerful language used. Repetitive (use of "she," her good judgement).

Possible Next Steps: Review different types of sentences. Generate synonym lists for traits chosen (e.g., brave, heroic, courageous, etc.) and characters (Kit, her, she, the heroine, etc.). Discuss, with the student, the importance of reflecting on peer and teacher feedback, particularly suggestions on how to avoid repetitive language.

Language Expository Writing Exemplar

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Approaching MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Cue For Treason Essay

In the novel Cue for Treason, Sir Philip Morton proves to be a very disliked and unwanted character. In the novel, Sir Philip Morton plays a very nasty man who wants to seek revenge on Peter (a teenage boy from Cumberland England) who threw a rock at him. Even though Peter did not actually hit him with the rock, Sir Philip is determined to do something very atrocious to get back at him. Sir Philip portrays the role as a very villainous person by showing signs of cruelness, greediness and cowardly ness.

There are many ways in the novel, which Sir Philip Morton proves to be a very cruel person. One of the ways Sir Philip shows his cruelty is by his determination to capture Peter and seek revenge. Another way that he shows cruelty is by plotting with his men to kill the Queen. Sir Philip wants to kill the Queen because he wants to increase his power and wealth. As well, once John Somers kills the Queen, during a cannon scene from the premiere of "Henry The Fifth", Sir Philip Morton will have him killed so there is no question about how she died. Throughout all of his actions, Sir Philip Morton shows that he is a very cruel person to others.

Greediness is another one of Sir Philips many hated character traits. He plans to marry Kit because of her wealth and inheritance. Kit Kirkstone comes from a very wealthy family and is heir to lots of land, and that is what attracts Sir Philip to her. Another way that Sir Philip shows his greediness is by putting up a wall around land that was not his own so that he could increase his estate by claiming that it was his property. These are some of the ways that Sir Philip Morton proves to be a very greedy person.

Lastly, Sir Philip Morton proves to be a very cowardly person. One of the most obvious ways that he shows this is by him and his men besiegeing the Brownrigg's. Meaning that they gathered around their home armed and ready for someone to come out and kill. Also, Sir Philip also proves to be cowardly by getting people to do his work for him. An army of men always surrounds him, and when he wanted to kill the Queen, instead of doing it himself, he hired John Somers. This shows that Sir Philip is a very cowardly person.

In conclusion, it is shown that Sir Philip Morton is a very cruel, greedy and cowardly person. He shows cruelty by seeking revenge on Peter who didn't hit him with the rock. He shows greediness by planning on marrying kit for her wealth and inheritance and he shows cruelty just by being him self. That is why Sir Philip Morton is a very disliked and unwanted person.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Some sentences are unwieldy (overuse of "and"). Word usage awkward/wrong (cowardly ness).

Possible Next Steps: Review sentence varieties. Review use of thesaurus as a tool. Discuss instances where the student made vocabulary revisions (based on specific feedback, such as using "cowardly" in place of "greedy") to clarify the message.

Language Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student chooses language (word choices and sentence patterns) to make an impact on the reader.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

This piece of expository writing was developed using the entire writing process (pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading). Throughout the writing process, the student benefited from peer and teacher feedback.

Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Essay

Attention! There's a villain in town and his name is Sir Philip Morton. In the novel Cue for Treason, Sir Philip is a very evil character. He builds a wall around common lands, he leads a treason plot against the queen, and attempts to marry a young heiress, Kit Kirkstone, for her estate. Sir Philip Morton is cruel, calculating, and cowardly.

In the novel Cue for Treason, Sir Philip Morton is a very cruel character. Firstly, he betrays his own country to increase his wealth and power. Sir Philip hires John Somers, a disgruntled actor of third-rate parts, to do the shooting of the Queen. After John Somers job was completed, He would be killed. Throughout the novel, Sir Philip Morton is on a wild goose chase with Peter, a young boy who merely shied a stone at him. Sir Philip will stop at nothing until he captures Peter. For these reasons, Sir Philip Morton is a very cruel character.

Sir Philip Morton is not only cruel, but also calculating. First of all, he never forgave the Queen for having insulted him at court, and is determined to get his revenge. Sir Philip is one of the leaders in the treason plot against the Queen. He is always thinking of ways to increase his wealth. For example, he encloses common lands and claims them as his own. Also, Sir Philip tries to marry Kit. He

doesn't really care about her, but only wants to lay his hands on the magnificent wealth and estate that she will inherit when she comes of age. As one can see, Sir Philip Morton is extremely calculating.

When looking for a word to describe Sir Philip Morton, cowardly is definitely a good one. When he wants something unlawful done, he doesn't do it himself. He is always accompanied by helpers who carry out his commands. When the Brownrigg's home was besieged, it was total chaos. Peter's father was shooting arrows; Peter's mother was dumping boiling water on Sir Philip's "helpers" and the whole time Sir Philip was taking cover behind a tree. Sir Philip didn't and had no intention of exposing himself to such peril. That's pretty cowardly.

In conclusion, Sir Philip Morton is cruel, calculating, and cowardly. He betrays his country for more wealth and power; he leads a treason plot against the Queen, and attempts to marry a young heiress, Kit Kirkstone, for her estate. Sir Philip Morton is a very evil character in the novel Cue for Treason.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Uses vocabulary appropriately to create an impression (disgruntled, besieged, chaos, peril, that's pretty cowardly). Varies types and lengths of sentences.

Possible Next Steps: Develop and discuss synonym list for describing character (Sir Philip Morton, he, the villain, the conspirator, Kit's would-be husband, etc.). Discuss how the student decided, in response to the feedback provided, what vocabulary to change (replace "attacked" with "besieged") and what to leave alone (that's pretty cowardly).

Conventions Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

This piece of expository writing was developed using the entire writing process (pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading). Throughout the writing process, the student benefited from peer and teacher feedback.

Not Meeting **MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE**

Cue for treason essay

Inthe 16th century men only coud become actors. Katherine Kirkstone who also is called Kit Kirkstone dressed up as a boy to escape from Philip Morton because he wanted to mary her and than ended up joining an acting troupe and prooved he was verry admirable caracter. in the novel Cue for treason Kit Kirkston was a good juge of caracter she is an extremly brave girl and prooved to be exellent actress in the novel.

First of all Kit shows that she can be an exellent juge of caracter in the novel "anyhow i've told mr. Desmond ill go go with him on condition that he takse you" mr. Desmond ofered to take Kit with him when mrs Desmond and him went to england but Kit wanted Peter too be able to come with them. This show that Kit trusts Peter and she thaught that he could be nice if he wants to "if you touch that bell cord said Kit in a high nervous voice behind me, you'll get something that will upset you still more" Kit recongised how odd mr Armthwaite was acting and recongised him as a conpsirater she also notised that he was one of the people that assosiated with sir Philip Morton . in bothcases were Kit juged a caracter she was right about there caractritsics.

Second althow Kit was thougt to be weak it did'nt show in her actions "shut up Peter said Kit she was, determind to

take what was coming to her" Peter tried to talk Kit out of letting Burbag beat her for runing away rite befor the play but she woudn't lissen to him and was gonig to putup with any pain that he gave her "so she rode back. Heroine or idiot.? I don,t know i supose she thaugt if she knocked them flying once she coud bo back to england but instead she tried to save Peter from the theives. Peter thaugt Kit was weak when he fuond out that kit was actualy a girl although soon he discovered that she was'nt even close to weak but he was actualy looking at a hero who woud eventualy help him sav ethe queen.

Last, only boys coud become actors in those days but Kit disgised as a boy joined an acting troupe and became one of the best actors n the troup "I noticed in time that Desmonds eyes were alight with interst as the boy recited" Wile persistantly trying to entre the Desmond company Kits acting struk an interest in mr Desmond,mr Desmond hired her in the company and gave her some of the top acting spots "I'd hit a girl disguised and not the boy she had always pretnended to be" Wile trying to tell Peter that they where going to leave Kit got hit by Peter in the chest. When Kit doubled with pain and woud'nt come up Peter realised that Kit was actualy a girl Kit soon became the phenomonon of england and had everyone buzing about her acting.

In this novle Kit is an exellent juge of caracter also she is an exeedingly brave caracter and last she is an extrodinairy actress an admirabel young girl thats what Kit prooves to be in the novle Cue For Treason. Even thoug girls could not become actreses in the 16th century a young girl from cumberland europe made it as one

Rationale for Assigned Level: Frequent errors interfere with meaning.

Possible Next Steps: Have the student practise self-editing in small chunks. Emphasize that ideas are well developed in the piece, but good ideas are not clear because of errors. Discuss realistic strategies to help the student with editing and proofreading.

Conventions Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

This piece of expository writing was developed using the entire writing process (pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading). Throughout the writing process, the student benefited from peer and teacher feedback.

Approaching MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Cue for Treason

Kit Kirkstone is an extraordinary character in the novel Cue for Treason Kit is a 13 year old girl who learns of a plot to kill the queen. She has to travel across the country to inform the Queen and save her life. Geoffrey Trease does an excellent job writing this book in the story it is revealed that Kit is brave a talented actress and a very determined young lady.

Firstly Kit is a tremendously brave person her bravery is shown when she put her life in danger saving Mr. Desmond from drowning. Kit had to jump into a swiftly moving river and carry Mr. Desmond on her back and stay afloat. Kits bravery is also shown when she joined the acting troop this is brave because girls and women are forbidden to act and she could become discovered by the other actors and kicked out with nowhere else to go. Kit's bravery throughout the story helps save her live, and others.

Secondly Kit Kirkstone proves to be an extremely talented actress and shows how good she acts when she tricks everyone into thinking that she is a boy. For weeks nobody new she was a girl until Peter Brownrigg got into a fight with her and realized she was a girl. Kit's good acting skills even got her the lead roll in a play Kit has to memorize

numerous lines and play the roll of Juliet in front of the queen herself. Kit's good acting skills helped her stay hidden, and gave her a home throughout her struggles.

Finally, Kit is a very determined individual. She showed how determined she was when she stopped Sir Phillip Mortin's plot to kill the queen. Kit accompanied with Peter had to travel across the country to inform the queen and save her life. Kit and Peter had to elude Sir Philip and his men who sought to kill them. Another way Kit was determined is when she wants to get the play back from the Yellow Gentleman who stole it from Peter and she devises a plan to steal the play back. While she distracts the two men by pretending that she is a distressed damsel, Peter sneaks into the house to steel the play, Kit's determination helped her progress through the novel.

In conclusion, it has been shown that Kit Kirkstone is brave, a good actressand determined in her journey to stop sir Philip's plot to kill the Queen. This 13 year old girl goes against the odds, and prevails. Kit Kirkstone is an incredible character in the novel Cue for Treason.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Various errors are present, but meaning is evident.

Possible Next Steps: Review end punctuation, apostrophes, and strategies for synonym spellings that spell-checker doesn't catch. Discuss why the student did not consider suggestions on comma usage from peer editors when creating the final draft.

Conventions Expository Writing Exemplar

Competency: Student uses conventions (spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation) and resources (spell-checker, thesauruses, dictionaries, etc.) to edit and proofread to make meaning clear.

Description of the Task: Over a period of several weeks, as part of a novel study, students prepared a character sketch (in essay form) on a major character in *Cue for Treason* by Geoffrey Trease. They employed the writing process to create a polished final draft.

Final Draft

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Meeting MID-GRADE 8 LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

Peter Brownrigg!!!

In the novel Cue For Treason, Peter is a very admirable character. Peter is a fourteen-year-old country boy, living in Cumberland and his role in the story is to reveal Sir Philip Morton to the secret service and to save Her majesty. In the novel Cue For Treason, by Geoffrey Trease, Peter proves to be brave, determined and quick thinking.

Peter's first character trait that is revealed in the novel Cue For Treason is bravery. Peter leaves his home and family when running from Sir Philip Morton and his men, and makes it on his own, when he is only fourteen. Peter's bravery is also demonstrated when he enters Sir Philip's Peel Tower in Cumberland in search of Tom Boyd after he disappeared while investigating the conspirators. This is how Peter's bravery is displayed in the novel.

Another one of Peter's character traits proved in the novel Cue For Treason is determination. Peter is determined when he swam the quarter-mile across Ullswater Lake so that he could find someone to tell about Sir Philip Morton and the death of Tom Boyd. This showed his determination because the water was freezing cold and he thought about turning to swim back but decided against it in order to attempt to save his country. Peter's determination is also shown when

he gets Shakespeare's play, Henry The Fifth, stolen from him by 'The Yellow Gentleman' and he goes to his house by boat, down the river, climbs up the side, and goes into the house to get the play back. This is how the novel reveals Peter's determination.

The final character trait of Peter that is displayed in the novel Cue For Treason is quick-thinking. Peter hides from Sir Philip Morton in the trunk in the actors' dressing room because he thinks Sir Philip wants to arrest him. This shows quick-thinking because he was being chased and seeing the trunk he got into it, then was carried on stage in the trunk. Because it was used for a coffin in the play, Sir Philip didn't get a chance to look in it. Peter also shows quick-thinking when Sir Robert Cecil figures out the message in the poem – SENDNEWSBYPEEL – and Peter thinks it to mean Sir Philip's Peel Tower back in Cumberland. These are the ways in which the novel shows Peter's quick-thinking.

To sum things up, the novel Cue For Treason, by Geoffrey Trease, proves that Peter Brownrigg is a very admirable character. It confirms Peter's bravery, determination and quick-thinking when he leaves his home, steals the play back, and hides from Sir Philip Morton. These are ways in which Peter proves to be an admirable character in the novel Cue For Treason.

Rationale for Assigned Level: Correct usage is reflected throughout.

Possible Next Steps: Move to more sophisticated punctuation (semi-colon, etc.). Discuss how, in the careful final edit, the student addressed the end punctuation and run-on sentences flagged by peer editors, with a positive result.

Strategies to Support Reading Comprehension and Expository Writing in Grade 8 Classrooms

As teachers reflect on the Provincial Report on Student Performance at the end of January, they may uncover gaps in student understanding. Students may require scaffolding and strategic instruction (formative assessment for/as learning) to meet expectations based on end-of-year learning outcomes, as well as for summative assessment and reporting in June. Generally, these gaps are where the reading and/or writing processes break down for the learner, and a variety of needs may arise as teachers plan for differentiation.

The chart on the following pages lists formative assessment strategies and tools that offer entry points for scaffolding and strategic instruction to ensure success for the diversity of learners in Manitoba classrooms.

The chart uses abbreviations for the departmental sources in which the strategies and tools can be found:

- **FFI:** *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation* (see Grade 8 section and Blackline Masters [BLMs])
- **IT:** *Independent Together: Supporting the Multilevel Learning Community*
- **SFAL:** *Success for All Learners: A Handbook on Differentiating Instruction: A Resource for Kindergarten to Senior 4 Schools*

Detailed descriptions of the strategies and tools are outlined in the sources referenced.

Strategies and Tools to Support Reading Comprehension and Expository Writing		
Strategy	**Description/Examples**	**Source**
Goal Setting		
• Develop learners' confidence and metacognitive skills as independent readers/writers. • Engage learners in constructing criteria for "quality work." • Focus reflective conversations and journal writing/reflection. (See Y-chart* for scaffolding reflection.) • Engage learners in portfolio assessment for/as learning.	• Commence with whole-class goals (e.g., "What strategies do competent readers use before, during, and after reading?; "What structures do authors use to write expository texts?"). • Model goal setting at the outset of each lesson or workshop (e.g., "My goal today is to show you how to…"). • Schedule time for reflection each day (e.g., Exit Slips).	**FFI:** 8-32; 8-392; 8-118*; BLM 46-Personal Goal Setting; BLM 49-Goal Setting for Strategic Learning **IT:** 2.8; BLM 1-Reflection—Metacognition*; BLM 2-Constructing Student-Generated Criteria for Quality Work*; BLM 3-My Learning Goal Log
Notemaking		
• Explore, remember, organize, record, reflect on, and communicate ideas and thinking, using – structured notemaking – interactive notemaking – Slim Jims – jotting – sketching*	• Model notemaking (e.g., using T-chart, self-adhesive notes, sketching, graphic organizers). • Guide notemaking in flexible groupings. • Have students practise notemaking in pairs. • Construct criteria for "quality" notemaking.	**FFI:** 8-14; 8-76; 8-196; 8-248; 8-358 **SFAL:** 6.82 ***FFI:** 8-19; 8-278; 8-116; 8-120; 8-218; 8-254; 8-278; 8-322; 8-352
Read Aloud/Think Aloud		
• Listen to/comprehend quality writing in performance (fluency). • Model Before-During-After (B-D-A) reading strategies. • Introduce specialized and unfamiliar vocabulary* to facilitate comprehending and composing. • Model strategies for representing and writing. • Engage readers and writers in the joy of reading.	• Read quality literature regularly. • Read magazine/newspaper articles to augment a content area topic. • Share/articulate comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading (e.g., link prior knowledge, make predictions, create mental pictures, self-monitor, use fix-ups). • Draw students' attention to a variety of ways of representing ideas, information, and thinking through authors' strategies and techniques. • Celebrate reading!	**FFI:** 8-42; 8-72; 8-86 ***FFI:** 8-94; 8-96 to 8-98; 8-141; 8-380 **SFAL:** 6.31

(continued)

Strategies and Tools to Support Reading Comprehension and Expository Writing *(continued)*		
Strategy	**Description/Examples**	**Source**
SQ3R		
• Develop an understanding of non-fiction text structures and features to support students in making meaning before, during, and after reading. • Organize information and ideas for notemaking/writing.	• **SQ3R** (Robinson): – **Survey:** Survey the text for italicized/bold words, pictures, graphs, and so on. – **Questions:** Jot down questions using the headings or subtitles. – **Read:** Read the text in "chunks." – **Recite:** After reading each "chunk," tell someone the answer to the question. – **Review:** After reading the whole text, summarize what was read.	**FFI:** 8-68; 8-72, 8-84; 8-212 **SFAL:** 6.85
Text Sets		
• Differentiate reading instruction and offer all learners access to a wide variety of texts for enjoyment, learning, and models for writing.	• Collect a variety of different expository and narrative texts (e.g., stories, picture books, poetry, magazines, images, multimedia texts) across a wide range of reading abilities to augment content/textbooks. • Engage students in constructing the text set(s).	**FFI:** 8-108 **IT:** 4.6
Focused Observation		
• Use classroom-based assessment for/as learning (formative assessment).	• Observation is a credible assessment method when teachers – target learning outcomes and/or continua descriptors – record "verbatim" notes – plan a variety of authentic literacy-rich contexts – observe over time	**FFI:** Focus for Assessment (column 3) **IT:** 3.7; BLM 5-Focused Observation Form (or BLM 11-Record-Keeping Form)

Suggestions for Selecting Reading Materials for Grade 8 Classrooms

Department-Approved Resources

Various reading materials that have been reviewed through Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth's formal learning resources review process for the content areas, including textbooks, are listed in annotated bibliographies available on the Department's website: <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/learnres/bibliographies.html>. Reading materials should also include a variety of magazines, media texts, and online resources (some websites are listed later in this section).

Selecting Additional Reading Materials

The following titles were not reviewed through Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth's formal learning resources review process. They are not endorsed by the Department and do not carry a Manitoba recommended designation.

In addition to using the above resources, many teachers have successfully used other titles in English language arts classrooms and as part of text sets to support literacy across the curriculum. The following list is representative of authentic literature selections that might be considered for classroom use and as a starting point in building a classroom library.

Literature selections should be reviewed by school division staff before they are used with students. In this way, community sensitivities and the perspectives of the student population are taken into account.

The following list of resources includes picture books, poetry, non-fiction, and fiction. Only the authors and titles are provided. For additional information, visit the Department's website at: <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/cur/ela/>.

Picture Books

*	Atwood, Margaret	*Bashful Bob and Doleful Dorinda*
*	Bailey, Linda	*Stanley's Party*
	Baylor, Byrd	*The Table Where Rich People Sit*
	Bunting, Eve	*I Am the Mummy Heb-Nefert*
	Fletcher, Ralph	*Twilight Comes Twice*
	Innocenti, Roberto	*Rose Blanche*
*	Oberman, Sheldon	*The Shaman's Nephew: A Life in the Far North*
	Polacco, Patricia	*Pink and Say*
*	Setterington, Ken	*The Wild Swans*
	Sis, Peter	*Tibet: Through the Red Box*
*	Taylor, C.J.	*Peace Walker: The Legend of Hiawatha and Tekanawita*
*	Turney-Zagwyn, Deborah	*Long Nellie*

* Denotes Canadian title.

Poetry

Cormier, Robert	*Frenchtown Summer*
George, Kristine O'Connell	*Hummingbird Nest: A Journal of Poems*
George, Kristine O'Connell	*Swimming Upstream: Middle School Poems*
Janeczko, Paul B.	*That Sweet Diamond: Baseball Poems*
Smith, Charles R., Jr.	*Rimshots: Basketball Pix, Rolls and Rhythms*
Zimmer, Tracie Vaughn, and Andrew Glass	*Sketches from a Spy Tree*

Non-Fiction

*	Batten, Jack	*The Man Who Ran Faster Than Anyone: The Story of Tom Longboat*
*	Bogart, Jo Ellen	*Emily Carr: At the Edge of the World*
*	Cooper, John	*Rapid Ray: The Story Ray Lewis*
*	Galloway, Priscilla	*Too Young to Fight: Memories from Our Youth during World War II*
*	Greenwood, Barbara	*The Last Safe House: A Story of the Underground Railroad*
*	Jacobson, Rick	*Picasso: Soul on Fire*
*	Jocelyn, Marthe	*A Home for Foundlings*
	Johnson, Sylvia A.	*Mapping the World*
*	Kacer, Kathy	*The Underground Reporters: A True Story*
*	Levine, Karen	*Hana's Suitcase*
*	Loyie, Larry, and Constance Brissenden	*As Long as the Rivers Flow*
	Pratt-Serafini, Kristin Joy	*Salamander Rain: A Lake and Pond Journal*
	Sis, Peter	*The Tree of Life: Charles Darwin*
	Wright-Frierson, Virginia	*A Desert Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk in the Sonoran Desert*

Fiction

	Avi	*The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*
*	Bawtree, Michael	*Joe Howe to the Rescue*
	Creech, Sharon	*Love That Dog*
	Crutcher, Chris	*Whale Talk*
*	Doyle, Brian	*Uncle Ronald*
*	Ellis, Deborah	*The Breadwinner*
*	Givner, Joan	*Ellen Fremedon*
*	Heneghan, James	*The Grave*
	Hesse, Karen	*Out of the Dust*
*	Horvath, Polly	*Everything on a Waffle*
*	Kogawa, Joy	*Naomi's Road*
*	Kositsky, Lynne	*The Thought of High Windows*

* Oppel, Kenneth	*Airborn*
Paulsen, Gary	*How Angel Peterson Got His Name: And Other Outrageous Tales about Extreme Sports*

Identifying Grade-Appropriate Texts

The following online resources will assist teachers in selecting grade-appropriate texts suitable for instruction and for implementing the Middle Years Assessment Policy in Grade 8 classrooms:

- Manitoba Text Book Bureau (MTBB): <www.mtbb.mb.ca>
  The MTBB online catalogue lists reading series and books, organized by grade, that have been approved for use in Manitoba.
- Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP): <www.wncp.ca>
  The WNCP website lists materials for teacher and student use, organized by grade.

Other websites provide guidance in selecting grade-appropriate texts, many organized by genre (ranging from classic fiction and graphic novels to non-fiction texts on a variety of topics). These websites may be of assistance in identifying a wide variety of texts to meet the diverse interests and needs of students:

- American Library Association. Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA): <www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists>
- Canadian Children's Book Centre. Canadian Children's Book News: <www.bookcentre.ca>
- International Reading Association (IRA): <www.reading.org>
- Manitoba Library Association. Canadian Review of Materials: <www.umanitoba.ca/cm>
- Manitoba School Library Association. Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Awards (MYRCA): <www.myrca.ca>
- Resource Links: Connecting Classrooms, Libraries and Canadian Learning Resources: <www.resourcelinks.ca>
- University of Calgary. The Children's Literature Web Guide: <www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/index>

Many public library websites from across Canada and the Unites States also provide extensive lists of books, organized by genre or topic, that appeal to and are appropriate for young adult readers.

In addition, many school divisions generate online lists of texts organized by grade, topic, and/or genre. One example is:

- Virtual Middle School Library. The Reading Room: <http://www.sldirectory.com/libsf/booksf/kidsbooks.html#young>

Many of the titles cited in this document, as well as literature reviews, are available from:

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth
Instructional Resources Unit (Education Library)
1181 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg MB R3G 0T3
Website: <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/iru>

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SECTION 4:
REPORTING RESULTS

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REPORTING RESULTS

Overview of the Reporting Process

The summative student performance information, which is for reporting, is derived from a classroom-based assessment process in which students and teachers work collaboratively to clarify and set learning goals and to monitor and discuss progress to promote student learning. The reported level of performance for each student on each competency identified in the policy is made relative to the criteria provided in the reporting templates found in Section 3, and is based on each student's furthest point of advance **as of the last two weeks of January***.

Sending Results to Parents

Reporting templates provided by the Department are used for communicating results to parents. Samples of the templates are provided in Section 3 of this document. As detailed in the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth policy document *Middle Years Assessment of Key Competencies in Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, Expository Writing, and Student Engagement*, these reports are to be sent home "in a timely manner" as determined by local discretion. A report is to be sent home for all students in the associated grade regardless of their status in the classroom, except in cases where exemptions have been approved.

These reporting templates may also be used to communicate information to parents and students at other times, and may be used in classrooms to assist in monitoring and documenting ongoing progress relative to the competencies.

Schools or school divisions wishing to incorporate reporting for this policy into other reporting procedures, rather than use the reporting templates in Section 3, must first obtain authorization from Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth.

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* French Immersion schools with a late immersion program may choose to base the report of Grade 7 students in *Mathématiques* on the **first two weeks of March**.

Sending Results Data to the Department

Results data (not the reports to parents themselves) are to be sent to the Department by the end of February*. Schools will receive a letter each fall describing the procedures for reporting data to the Department. This data will be communicated to the Department on a student-by-student basis and will be based on students enrolled in Grade 7 and Grade 8 in the school according to September 30th enrollment data. Procedures for adding new students and removing students no longer enrolled will be provided.

Student Performance below the Lowest Levels Described in the Competency Criteria

If a student's late-January performance level is below the lowest level described in the reporting template for a given competency, then no performance levels should be indicated in the report to parents but an explanation should be made in the comment section.

For reporting data to the Department, an option will be provided for each competency to indicate that the student is performing below the lowest performance level for the competency.

Student Performance above the Highest Levels Described in the Competency Criteria

If a student's performance is above the highest level described in the reporting template for a given competency, then the highest level of performance should be indicated in the report. A comment may be made in the comment section of the reporting template (to parents) to explain.

Students with Exceptional Circumstances

In rare instances it will not be possible to report results to parents or to the Department as required by this policy due to "exceptional circumstances." For example, the student might have arrived in the province in January with no performance information available. Such a student may be exempted from the reporting process provided the parents are informed, they give consent, and the school makes a request that includes the details of the circumstances to the Department by the end of January.

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* French Immersion schools with a late immersion program opting to report student results for *Mathématiques* relative to the first two weeks of March can report results to the Department by the end of March.

The format of the request letter is shown below:

> Re: Middle Years Assessment Policy—Exceptional Circumstances Exemption Request
>
> Include: School name; Student name and MET number*; description of the exceptional circumstances; statement that the parent approves of the exemption; school contact person with title, telephone number, and signature.

The request may be mailed or sent by fax as follows:

English Program:
Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch
71-1567 Dublin Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3E 3J5
Fax: (204) 948-2442

Français or French Immersion Program:
Bureau de l'éducation française
Direction des services de soutien en éducation (Section Évaluation)
509-1181 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3G 0T3
Fax: (204) 948-3234

Once the exemption from reporting is granted by the Department:

- no reporting to the parents is required
- reporting to the Department is required, with the exemption indicated in the report and no performance levels for any of the competencies reported

Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- **Reporting to parents:** A check box is provided in the reporting template for use when the IEP relates to the competencies addressed in the policy**. Performance levels in the associated competencies need not be indicated if the student is working below the lowest level in the reporting template according to the IEP. A comment should be made in the comment box.

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* Inquiries regarding MET numbers should be made to the Professional Certification and Student Records Unit at 1 800 667-2378.

** In the context of this policy and associated report, the IEP would reflect special learning needs related to the competencies as documented in the plan. Students with special learning needs that are not related to the competencies participate in the same assessment and reporting as their peers. Information about IEPs is available at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/specedu/iep/>.

- **Reporting to the Department:** A method to indicate the IEP will be provided. It will be presumed that the student's performance relative to the competencies is below the lowest levels described in the reporting template. If, however, the student's performance of any competency is within the levels of performance in the report, this information should be provided.

English as an Additional Language Students and *Phase d'accueil, Bloc intensif* Students

This includes cases where the student's status as an additional-language learner has an impact on performance results.

- **Reporting to parents:** The report should not indicate the levels of performance if the student is working below the lowest level in the reporting template due to the student's language learning status. A comment should be made in the comment box.
- **Reporting to the Department:** A method to indicate this situation will be provided. It will be presumed that the student's performance relative to the competencies is below the lowest levels described in the reporting template. If, however, the student's performance of any competency is within the levels of performance in the report, this information should be provided.

Reporting Results to the Public

Schools and school divisions report to the public in the manner described in the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth policy document *Middle Years Assessment of Key Competencies in Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, Expository Writing, and Student Engagement:* "Schools and school divisions/districts are to include an analysis of school/school division level results in their report to the community, along with appropriate contextual background information" (8). The Department will provide provincial, divisional, and school summaries to school divisions and independent schools.

SECTION 5:
USING SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT DATA

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USING SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT DATA

Although the January reports are summative, the data generated from them can be used to inform future educational decisions in support of Middle Years learners.

Classroom

At the classroom level, teachers, students, and parents can use the data as additional information to set goals and monitor progress over time. Particularly if students are having difficulty in one or more of the competencies, special attention by the teacher, support teachers, parents, and the students is necessary to address any newly identified areas of concern or to continue support for the student.

Teachers can also use this summative data for formative purposes by involving students in reflecting on work samples and on their progress to date. Through this process, students are also involved in setting appropriate short- and long-term goals for the remainder of the school year.

School and School Division

The data sent by schools will be summarized by the Department and returned to schools and school divisions. Because these reports are based on descriptors and exemplars for each level of performance, schools will be provided with reliable year-to-year information on how well their students are performing in the key competencies in language arts and mathematics. This data can be used to inform decisions on how best to support Middle Years learners, and to identify areas of strength or concern and possible professional development priorities or resources at the school and divisional levels.

Province

The provincial summary of the data will provide a snapshot of how students are performing province-wide. Analyzing and reflecting on this summary of the data each year will influence future policies and decisions about how best to support Middle Years learners.

SECTION 6:
REFERENCES

REFERENCES

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